

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FREETO 00624 221644Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
HA-05 IO-13 TRSE-00 /077 W
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R 221610Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7170
INFO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, SL
SUBJ: ONE PARTY BILL TO BE INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT

REF: FREETOWN 0423 AND PREVIOUS

1. WITHIN THE SPACE OF TWO DAYS BOTH PRESIDENT STEVENS AND VICE-PRESIDENT KOROMA ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY THAT MOVES TO IMPLEMENT A ONE- PARTY STATE IN SIERRA LEONE WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN SHORTLY. VICE-PRESIDENT KOROMA TOLD A CONFERENCE OF CIVIL SERVANTS ON FEBRUARY 16, THAT GOVERNMENT PLANS TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION IN PARLIAMENT SOON TO PERMIT THE ADOPTION OF A SINGLE PARTY POLITICAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. PRESIDENT STEVENS TOLD A DISTRICT CONVENTION OF THE RULING ALL PEOPLE'S PARTY (APC) ON FEBRUARY 18, THAT GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE STEPS NOW TO TRANSFORM SIERRA LEONE INTO A ONE-PARTY STATE "FOLLOWING THE POPULAR DEMAND FROM ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY".

2. BEGIN LOU - EMBASSY COMMENT: WIDESPREAD RUMORS CLAIM THAT LEGISLATION TO EFFECT A ONE-PARTY STATE WILL BE INTRODUCED WHEN PARLIAMENT RECONVENES LATE IN FEBRUARY. IF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS IS FOLLOWED THE STEPS NECESSARY TO ES-

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TABLISH A SINGLE PARTY STATE APPEAR FORMIDABLE, INVOLVING SUBSTANTIAL REVISION OF CHAPTER ONE OF THE CONSTITUTION "PROTECTION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL". REVISION OF ANY SECTION OF THIS CHAPTER REQUIRES A BILL TO BE PASSED BY TWO SUCCESSIVE SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT, THERE BEING A DISSOLUTION AND REELECTION OF PARLIAMENT BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND SESSIONS. GIVEN THE APPARENT

CONFIDENCE THE GOVERNMENT HAS OF ITS CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY,
WE DO NOT EXCLUDE AN EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL ROUTE TO A ONE-
PARTY STATE IF THE LEGALITIES BECOME TOO AWKWARD. END LOU AND
EMBASSY COMMENT.
LINEHAN

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Message Attributes

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